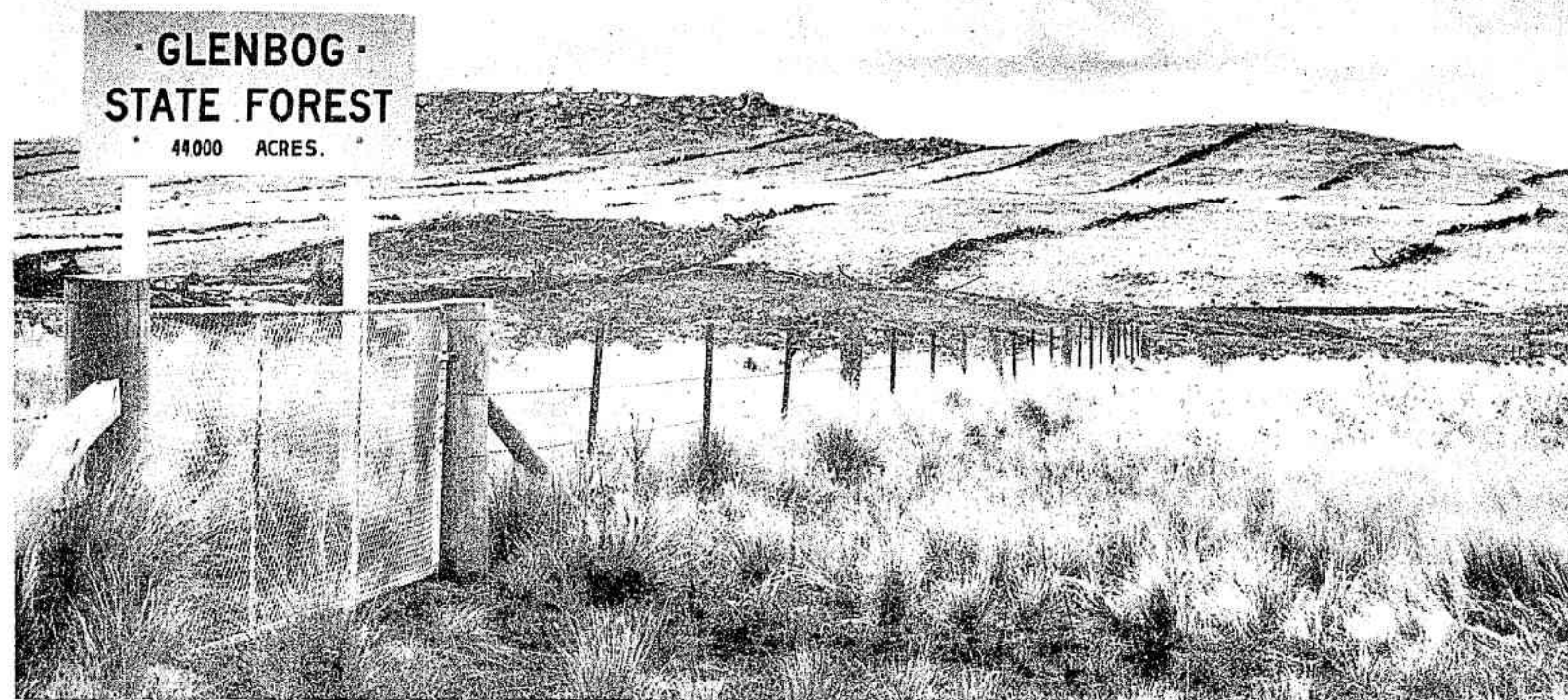


after you've read this **WORONI**

EAT IT!



IS FISHPULPING MORAL?

By Ken Newcombe.

Something smells a little when a decision to limit the budget of the polluters very own environment actionless organisation, the Australian Conservation Foundation, is reversed amidst a flurry of flimsy excuses. There has been an initiative to fund a number of environment action groups outside the ACF. It has been taken by the Minister for the Environment and Conservation Moss Cass (interviewed on the centre pages) but as yet we do not know just which groups will receive the money for the next financial year. All the while however, one can't help growing a little more apprehensive about a government giving some money to some organisations already prominent, particularly if their tone of voice has been heard at a dull drone for the past year or so. The question must have been asked already, and that is, "If there has to be a selection of groups, who will the money go to?" Indeed is it worth spending some money now reinforcing structures which should be completely ignored if and when a lot more money becomes available. The expenditure of any money would be justified if it was going to be used in the interests of more than the few to which it is given. But of the group of people who are already active in respectable environment action groups the question must be asked "whose environment are they aiming to protect?"

If we take two major environment issues of the day: Lake Pedder and the French Nuclear tests, then it is my contention that many conservationists have a distorted view of what is important, a distorted view of reality or both.

Lake Pedder is certainly a beautiful unique wilderness area and if there is not too great a social cost in saving it then it should be saved. But if you look at Lake Pedder from another viewpoint, that of Lake Pedder's "hidden curricu-

um" then that chain of events which will ultimately and insidiously effect all Tasmanians comes into play. The rationale for flooding Pedder by the Tasmanian State Government has been that the state has an obligation to make every ounce of clear Hydro Electric energy available that it possibly can. Saving Lake Pedder would lose that vital tit-bit of energy which is going to attract large scale industry to Tasmania. But that's precisely what Tasmania can do without; multi nationals which are begged to come to take cheap power from a susceptible virgin state. Already Tasmania has the Burnie-Acid plant on its northern shores. It churns out thousands of tons of sulphur dioxide a year. The sea is changed in colour for miles around and its ecosystems are vastly simplified or non-existent. The Tasmanian Government won't do anything because it collects at least 12 million dollars revenue from the plant each year. The Electrolytic Zinc Co. on the Derwent River sends a constant stream of red and orange pollutants for miles downstream. Calcium pollution is already extreme, this and other heavy metals have closed down oyster beds in the Derwent estuary 8 - 10 miles away. Can the Tasmanians now afford to enforce these industries to pay or even to stop polluting when the state's economic survival rests on the continued happiness of the industries which they've coaxed to live in Tasmania? Of course not. Tasmania is even foolish enough to offer cheap power to more such companies all of which will make it "offers it can't refuse". Soon Tasmania itself a wilderness area compared with the mainland will be just a denuded refuse heap (to wit: Queenstown, Zeehan, the woodchip and fishpulp industry). The environment you would be protecting if you opposed flooding Pedder on these grounds would not be that for the middle

classes whose time can be spent hiking or flying over the Lake Pedder area, but the environment which all Tasmanians drink, breathe, walk and swim in.

The ease with which Australian eco-freaks have excited large numbers of Australians over the issue of the French tests has in some respects been heartening but in others been shameful and deceitful. While one is fully aware of the possible long term genetic effects of an addition to radioactive fallout no-one can show that the damage is anything more than minimal in comparison to the threats we constantly face in terms of a wide range of readily available drugs like aspirin and innumerable food dyes, organophosphates, chlorinated hydrocarbons and so on. Clearly there is a matter of principle involved and the Australian Government has rightly protested on these grounds.

What amazes me is the insincerity and extraordinary self-centred fears about a relatively harmless aspect of an issue which is in fact already causing severe or terminal damage to individuals of an entire culture in Micronesia. While most of us are up in arms about a possible future 10 - 100 malformed Australians, we seem to choose to totally disregard the real contemporary effects of French presence on hundreds of thousands of indigenous people in Micronesia and Polynesia. Quite apart from the fact that "accidental" fallout has already caused thyroid related disease among Pitcairn Islanders and widespread side effects such as severe headaches and prolonged flu-type symptoms in others, the advent of 20,000 French Soldiers in Micronesia has meant almost cultural genocide for the 100,000 or so indigenous peoples therein. Whole island populations have been shifted backwards and forwards for the expedience of testing (eg Bikinis); food chains have been poisoned with

Strontium 90 removing staple foods such as the crab (*Birgus latro*) out of the diet and all of the diseases carried by western man have been introduced to an island eco-system which has never been exposed to these diseases. Life has become sedentary; yet another canned beef society forced to live in disease ridden conditions which were never experienced in evolutionary terms. It is not so much that the indigenous peoples aren't warning us of their fate and crying out for help. The indigenous representatives in French Parliament have continually stressed that a fight against the French tests is a fight for their liberation; a freedom which if not soon forthcoming will never come at all. But even this destruction is perceived in relative terms for as Philip Adams once noted "a death in our streets is worth 10,000 in India", and one supposes that this goes for Micronesia and Polynesia as well.

While any environment issue like Black Mountain and Pedder should be fought, they must not become insular middle class issues. The environment which effects most people most of the time is the urban environment in Australia and there the real environmentalist it seems to me is the new alliance between the resident action groups and the trade unions like the Builder's Workers Industrial Union. Just what is the more urgent task? To ensure that most Australians enjoy an immediate environment which guarantees their health and well being or that a very few Australians can camp in a distant wilderness area or dabble their feet in the timeless waters of Pedder. If both issues have importance why is it that only those who are protecting the latter are being funded by the Department of Environment or is it simply part of the 'great Australian stupor' that we must perpetuate this peculiarly 'blinkered' view of environmental priorities.



NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WORLD POPULATION

The participants at the recent National Conference on World Population (held in Burgmann College over the vacation) were amazed when told that no reference to abortion as a means of birth control was to be made during a session being taped by the ABC. Was this decision made by the ABC or the organizers, Australian Council for Overseas Aid, because of their association's with catholic relief?

The questionnaires regarding student assessment of courses and teachers will be distributed soon. It is hoped all students will cooperate with this survey to obtain the most accurate results. If your subject has not yet been issued with questionnaires, tell the Students' Association Office. If you can assist in the survey, please offer - approach the S.A. Office.

WHAT IS FISHPULPING AND WHY?
Neatest correct entry wins a lifetime's supply Apply Business Manager.

The drinking water in Central & Southern Europe is becoming so heavily treated with chemicals that it is foul to taste. One response to this has been the Swedish Polar Water Company, which has recently installed a \$100,000 filling plant to help export one million gallons of pure drinking water in paper cartons.

Californian Leonard Moore plans to row a bathtub 52 miles across the Bering Strait from Alaska to Siberia this summer to boost international friendship.

A riot policeman being treated in hospital at Lyons, France, died when his oxygen tent exploded.

Thieves stole 28 monkeys, 264 parrots, 46 crocodiles, and 220 tortoises from an animal dealers yard in Vienna, and the neighbours didn't hear a thing.

TROUBLE OUT IN THE HASHLANDS

Nepal Government has finally caved in under the US Embassy pressure and has agreed to ban dope. Despite protests from proprietors, the government has revoked the licenses of Katmandu hash shops and restaurants selling dope. The government also plans legislation banning grass and opium cultivation. It will be a few months yet before it is known whether the ban will affect smoking habits in the Happy Valley, but chances are themove is just another Laotian-like bluff aimed at nipping off the US treasury yet again.



Allan Murray-Jones began his campaign for the presidency this week by attempting to bribe the Woroni staff for editorial support. The idealistic fortitude of the editors was not daunted and yet another political tactic of Murray-Jones failed. The Woroni editors then attempted to solicit money from Michael Dunne for editorial support. He proved incorruptible. We are now looking around for other ways and means of making money.

A recently completed study by a group of Maryland psychiatrists has concluded that 'President Nixon laughs in the wrong places.' The study, which took a year, was sponsored by the American Psychiatry Assoc., studied hundreds of film clips, tapes and personal accounts of Nixonian behaviour. The report stated Nixon's outbursts of hilarity during cruel war scenes in his favourite film "Patton", as well as his reported chuckling while announcing the December bombing of North Vietnam. The report summed up by saying "President Nixon has an extremely unusual sense of humour".

STUDENT RESIDENCE IN THE FUTURE

The University sees the need for additional student residential places by the end of the 1976-78 triennium.

At present the University is building a non-collegiate style residence near Sullivans Creek where 10 student rooms will be clustered around a shared lounge and kitchen. An example of this general style of residence is at the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

By next year the University will have on site the affiliated residential colleges, the halls of residence and this non-collegiate type residence. The need for further student residence poses the question of what form it should take and, even further, whether it should be on campus or out in the community; already many students live in shared residences at various centres around Canberra. However, the opportunities for this in-community residence are fewer in Canberra than in the older and larger cities.

The University has engaged Melbourne architect Evan Walker, who has had much experience in the field of student housing both in Australia and overseas, to investigate the options open to the University for student residences, bearing in mind the possibilities offering within the Canberra community, as well as on the campus. As part of Mr Walker's investigations, a sampling will be made of student preferences. For this purpose Mr Walker will be setting up desks in the Union foyer, in the Chifley Library foyer and in some of the halls of residence at appropriate times, e.g. the desk will be manned in the Union during the lunch period on Monday 10th, Tuesday 11th and Wednesday 12th September.

Students are invited to speak to Mr Walker or his assistants and convey any notions they might have about student housing. If students have afterthoughts or if they miss Mr Walker, the Property and Plans Division (3649) will be glad to pass on telephone messages or letters addressed to the Registrar (Property and Plans).

A course on UFOs is to be started at an adult education centre in Bourmemouth, England.

The Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service would like to thank most sincerely the staff of the Forestry School who made space and services available on July 31st and August 1st for our mobile BTS Unit. And also we would like to thank all students who so generously donated - making the grand total of 328 units possible. Thanking you, Helen Refshauge, Hon. Director, and Ruthe Yarra, Senior Sister.

Dear Reader,

It has always been the well-testified aim of Woroni during a long and we hope we may say highly eventful career as a disseminator of news and opinions on the vital issues of the day to eschew sensationalism and the peddling of malicious gossip and tittle tattle of the type which can be of little or no public interest.

We feel that we must make our views known to many of the interested parties who may think that the publication of this journal will not be to their advantage. We have therefore decided to provide all those who would not like their names to appear in print with an opportunity to make their wishes known so that their reputations may not be needlessly besmirched.

We promise to respect the wishes of anyone who wants to protect himself, his wife or innocent little children from the ignominy and shame which might ensue from an unflattering mention in Woroni.

Anyone who so desires should simply complete the attached form.



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a letter?

Dear Woroni,
It has been interesting to read the recent and penetrating articles in Woroni on new religious movements. In the current stampede for spiritual fulfillment it seems questionable as to how many of these systems will stand the test of time. Religious movements, like material consumer-fashions can rapidly become as out-dated as yesterday's newspapers.

However, if you look back in your files, you will see that as long ago as 1968 an advertisement appeared in Woroni for instruction in spiritual awakening using the amazing Bert's Method. Since then, unseparated by the clamour of the inquisitive media, an ever-growing band of devotees has been assiduously practising the unique Method of the Great Bert.

It started in 1951, when the Great Bert was in India studying the relationship between native wholefoods and the structural measurements of the Taj Mahal to tie in with his detailed survey of the Great Pyramid, Stonehenge, and the wave oscillations around Southern pier (the resultant work: 'Atlantis Ahoy!' is obtainable from La Societe's bookshop). Here occurred the event that changed his life: he met the legendary guru Gupta 'Third Eye' Ramitin, a man who is claimed to have had more samadhis than you or I have had hot dinners and whose meditative silences are revered and treasured wherever he goes. Immediately, a strong affinity sprang up between the Great Bert and the chuckling mystic, and so began the five year ashram-crawl which took them the length and breadth of the country and ended

with the Great Bert returning to Europe as a missionary and communicator of the one, true way.

All you need is a full-length mirror, a piece of strong elastic to fit around your head, two empty matchboxes and a roll of ordinary domestic toilet tissue. Or, if you like, you can get the whole set-up in kit form by sending for the Complete Mystification Kit (Specially constructed units are also available for the elderly and bed-ridden. Even tiny tots can be catered for!) From then on you will progress rapidly through the intermediated stages towards the Final Solution, all the time under the ever-watchful eye of the Great Bert and the Satraps of La Societe Internationale de Bert. During weekly 'Awakenings' at your local Centre you will have the chance to meet other people who have chosen the Method as their path. There you can discuss with each other the significance of the Method and what it means to you to be one of the 'chosen' and also think up ways of influencing others to take up the Method.

There, in a nutshell, is an outline of what can truly be called a religious movement for today's people. I hope you will bring this communication to the attention of your readers as we feel that the time has really come and would, in fact, welcome exposure by your upright organ.

Yours eternally,
Basil A Chakra,
Chief Mystifier,
La Societe Internationale de Bert

We did have another letter but we lost it.

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solar energy

During the early 1950s there was a tremendous optimism about the future harnessing of solar energy to provide "cheap and abundant" energy for future industrial development. The realisation of this goal has so far fallen well short of these hopes. Only in Australia, Israel, Japan, USSR and to a small extent in the US, are solar heaters commercially available. In Australia these systems (installed for about \$300-\$400) may provide adequate hot water and home heating for most of the year, but need electrical boosters for winter or prolonged cloudy periods. Failures in the development of cheap solar cells for the direct conversion to electricity led to the general understanding that solar energy was only potentially useful for water heating in suitable climates, and as an alternative for undeveloped countries to the energy banquet enjoyed by the developed nations with access to fossil fuels.

Developments over the last few years in optical technology and an increased interest in possible alternative power sources have led to major developments in the harnessing of solar energy. The most promising advance has been in the area of "selective absorbers" — the commercial development of which is being pioneered by Marjorie and Aden Meinel at the Optical Sciences Centre in the US. Using this technique, the sun's rays are condensed by a lens or mirror onto a surface that has been specially coated to efficiently absorb solar radiation but inhibit the re-radiation of heat. The heat may then be extracted to produce steam for a conventional turbine generator which feeds into the national power grid.

The commercial viability of this system has not yet been fully evaluated, but even with the large capital outlay that is required it is expected to provide power at an economic cost comparable with current fossil fuel sources. The environmental costs should be substantially reduced.

A crude calculation of the area required for collectors (assuming Australia's total energy requirements for the year 2000 to be 100,000 MW/yr.) leads to a figure of 500 square miles, or a total land usage of an area 30 miles square. Nearly all of this land would still be available for grazing, in fact, the rainfall run-off from the collectors would significantly improve the agricultural value of the land in arid areas.

A significant difficulty to overcome with solar energy is energy storage during the night and the colder winter months. Short-term storage may be provided by storage of the heat transfer fluid (nitrogen or liquid sodium). A possibility for long-term storage and transportation is through the use of metal powders (e.g. reduction of alumina to aluminium powder) which may be burned to regain the "stored" energy.

Solar energy may never become our major source of energy but at the moment, with the future of nuclear fusion reactors still doubtful (and certainly not providing a significant power source this side of the year 2000) and "fast breeder" fission reactors posing possibly insurmountable problems of reactor safety and waste disposal, it offers a very attractive alternative.

THE VANISHING SOUTH-WEST

Tasmania's South-western corner was, up to the middle of this century, by far the largest area of temperate wilderness in Australia; a geographically self-contained region comprising over a fifth of the island's entire area. The inhospitability of the terrain, which consists primarily of very rugged mountain ranges and low-lying, marshy plains, discouraged the spread of settlement following Tasmania's European invasion. Early white visitors to the south-west were mostly prospectors or timber cutters, but with the general increase in affluence and leisure of recent times, very considerable interest was shown in the area's aesthetic and recreational properties. It is the only part of Australia in which can be undertaken long and adventurous trips by foot or canoe into country very remote from any form of settlement or vehicular access. It is also an area of unique scenic beauty — a kaleidoscope of jagged, quartzite ranges, endless button-grass plains, deep gorges, windswept moors and ancient rain-forests. With the disappearance of undisturbed primitive areas elsewhere the value of the availability for scientific study of unique eco-systems has also been noted.

The ending of the South-west's isolation came with the Gordon River hydro-electric scheme. The subsequent battle to rescue Lake Pedder from inundation by the scheme has received a large amount of publicity and it may yet be restored. Yet at no stage during the 60's was any serious attempt ever made to save the South-west as a whole; even if Pedder itself had been saved, the country surrounding it, comprising the geographical "heart" of the South-west will still have been irreparably scarred by the construction of 75 miles of major roads, a large township and man-made water storages inundating 200 square miles of button-grass plains. This was not only because of defeatism on the part of conservationists, but a result of the uniquely large amount of power yielded by the Hydro-electric Commission, and the absence of any machinery for making responsible decisions in issues concerned with land use. The public was presented with the Gordon River Scheme Authorising Bill as a fait accompli; never were they given an opportunity for participation in an open debate on the future of Australia's last wilderness.

Now once again sectional interest in short-term economic gain threatens the remaining untouched portion of the South-west. Precipitous Bluff, about 60 miles south of Lake Pedder and 30 miles east of Port Davey, stands 4,000 feet directly above New River Lagoon, which empties through a narrow channel into the Southern Ocean. Through the area passes the South Coast Track, a walking track which was created at public expense in 1960 and which forms the most commonly used route by bushwalkers in the South-west. The New River Basin contains rain-forest which has been free from wildfire for centuries, and consequently, has developed unique characteristics.

The lagoon itself is the only untouched major sea inlet anywhere on Tasmania's Coast. Now a mining company, Mineral Holdings of Australia, wants to move in and quarry the limestone which is the Bluff's guts. Their application for a lease was rejected by the Devonport mining warden in December of last year. Subsequently the company appealed to the Supreme Court of Tasmania, and the mining warden's disallowance was overruled. On what grounds? That the conservationists possess no "estate or interest" in the area. A wilderness may be destroyed by the sake of a legal technicality.

However the legal battle is not yet over: the Tasmanian Conservation Trust has appealed to the Full Bench of the Supreme Court. Federal aid seems likely; although the Federal Labor Government has yet done little in the direction of saving Pedder, it has offered to contribute towards the Trust's appeal costs, and Tom Uren has indicated that his government may not give an export license to a company mining a place such as Precipitous Bluff.

What will quarrying in the New River Basin mean? The disastrous aesthetic and ecological damage which a large quarrying operation can inflict upon its immediate surroundings is well evident in places such as Bungonia Gorge in NSW. Dust, noise and visual pollution on a massive scale will be unavoidable. Additionally the construction of access roads will end the wilderness quality of this region of the South-west, and will partially obliterate one of its major walking routes. The proposed quarry at Mt Armour (Colong Caves) in the Kanangra-Boyd National Park, NSW, would have required a major road, a power transmission line and a slurry pipeline to service it. Assuming this were so in the case of a quarry of Precipitous Bluff, it would mean the construction of 30 miles of road, pipe-and-power line along one of Australia's most beautiful and presently untouched coast lines.

There is little evidence to suggest that anything but extremely marginal benefits to the community as a whole will accrue from the economic exploitation of the South-west; at the same time there is good reason to suggest that retention of the area in its primitive condition will come to be appreciated in the future. As cities grow, wilderness becomes more and more a resource to be valued in its own right, not merely a something to be evaluated in terms of its economic potential. In USA the value of wilderness is already well appreciated, but the more popular large national parks are in danger of being swamped by pressure of the numbers making use of them. Such a situation has not yet arisen in Australia, but we need to plan for it now. The South-west has timber, minerals and water power potential; but these are also obtainable elsewhere, and the destiny of this unique region should not be jeopardised by ill-considered squandering of its economically usable resources.

Graduates & Government



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'Foresters are basically nice'



Foresters are basically nice people but when they get an idea in their heads it is very difficult to persuade them to change it. The Routleys have been pointing out deficiencies in the policies and actions of Forestry Commissions (NSW's in particular) for years. Their book "The fight for the Forests" which goes into this area in a lot more depth than the article can, should be available from the bookshop later this month. Produced by the ANU Press in a Research School of Social Sciences Monograph (250 pages with photographs), it will cost only \$2.50.

The quality of Australia's remaining forest is seriously threatened by proposed forestry activity. Because the forests were in the past logged conservatively and selectively, a method of exploitation which was fairly mild in its effects on non wood-production values such as wildlife and flora, aesthetics, watersheds, soils and recreation, Australians have been inclined to take the maintenance of these values in public forests for granted. (In fact their maintenance was an accidental by-product of the wood production methods then in use, rather than deliberately aimed at.) Now forest services are in the process of adopting and generally applying new methods which greatly increase the quantity of wood produced but have a serious effect on other forest values; these involve clearcutting over large areas and use of nearly all the forest crop (often as part of woodchip schemes), commonly followed by ecosystemification and impoverishment of the regrowth forest, and sometimes by its replacement by a monoculture such as of exotic pines. These clearcutting methods have proved a disaster in the USA, where they were introduced to the national forests in 1964, and have aroused vigorous protest from scientists, independent foresters, and conservation groups, (including the Sierra Club) across America.

As yet comparatively little of the planned destruction is to be seen. Yet the evidence is there that forest services have very large plans for woodchip projects and for other intensive schemes. The vicious Pine Program, with its destruction of mountain forest and its aim of at least 3 million acres of conifers by 2000, is well known. In fact far more than 3 million acres is likely to result — NSW alone now has a statutory minimum of 1½ million acres to go under pine. Contrary to misleading statements put out by forestry interests, nearly all the land for the program is obtained by clearing native forest. In NSW the program will affect forest right along the Dividing Range, and almost all the publicly owned mountain forest of NSW, much of it very beautiful, will be destroyed by 2000 — except, one hopes, for the ½ million acres already in national parks.

Less widely known, but no less threatening, are the extensive plans for woodchip projects. The NAFTA* Report, a major recent piece of forestry planning, predicted a figure for eucalypt woodchip exports which would involve woodchipping of about 20 million acres of

forest, almost half the publicly owned coastal forests. Two states, Tasmania, and now with the approval of the 1.2 million acre Manjimup project, WA, have already been committed to their predicted NAFTA quotas. *Almost all of Tasmania's forest is now in woodchip concessions.* Other states with big plans, for which locations are a closely guarded secret, are NSW and Queensland, with almost 5 and more than 6 million acres respectively on the NAFTA figures. Since NSW has only slightly more than 8 million acres of State Forest, this means that after allowing for the 1½ million acre pine program, very little of the NSW forest we see today will remain unaffected. The Q'land plans would certainly include some rainforest destruction. In the NT chipping of 2 million acres is being considered, with projects at Gove, Melville Island and Murganella. There are also plans for managing even the high-yield eucalypt forest left for sawnwood along intensive lines. The NSW Forestry Commissioner is a strong advocate of intensive forestry, especially Blackbutt plantations, and this is the likely fate of many fine North Coast forests. These plans are not of course publicly announced, but they can be gleaned from a reading of the relevant journals and by working back from figures such as those given in NAFTA.

Most of the woodchip contracts have provision for eventual development of associated pulp mills. These would essentially be a relocation of Japanese pulp mills here, in accordance with the plan of the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry to relocate Japan's most polluting industries in undiscriminating countries such as Australia. Pulp and paper making is among the world's most polluting industries — one of the Big Three, second only to industries based on petroleum and coal. If the pollution problems associated with pulp mills cannot be solved in the next decade, there will be strong pressure to relocate them here. Pulp mills would generate far more employment than woodchip schemes, but the prospect of our forested coastal areas dotted with highly polluting industrial complexes is one which gives even those foresters who can stomach woodchipping itself doubts. The preparedness to consider such developments provides a measure of the lack of discrimination in Australian planners' attitudes to industrial growth (less discriminating even than that of Japan) — an attitude apparently continuing under the new government.

It would seem reasonable to assume that if there are such large plans for developing intensive forest industries based on public forests, they must involve substantial public benefits, even if there are a "few drawbacks". But in fact this is not so. The export woodchip industry particularly (and other domestic forest industries to some extent) involves heavy public costs and virtually no public benefits. What benefits there are from the exploitation of this nominally public resource are highly concentrated and go largely to the forest industries and associated support industries. Among the heavy public costs are *environmental costs*.

In the case of pines these are especially conspicuous. Pine schemes which replace nat-

ive forest involve replacement of a rich and diverse system by an impoverished and monotonous one. Studies have shown that much wildlife, except for some ground-dwelling and feeding species which are already favoured by partial land clearance, are eliminated, and that even those that remain, such as the highly adaptable Brush Possum, depend essentially upon adjacent areas of eucalypt forest. Some of the most important work in this area has been done by the ANU Zoology Department. There are also serious costs in terms of soils, watersheds and aesthetic values; in fact only wood-production gains, and that probably in the short-term.

The environmental effects of woodchipping, although initially less obvious, are only slightly less severe, and this is more than offset by their greater extensiveness. Since there is a long period (usually about 6 years) during which soils are inadequately protected after clearcutting, scis can suffer severely, particularly in areas of steep slope and severe rainstorms such as Eden. They can suffer from compaction by machinery in the initial operation, by soil erosion removing some of their nutrient carrying layer of topsoil, and from nutrient loss. In general under clearcutting soils are being lost far more rapidly than they are being formed (so that in USA it has been estimated that Montana's soils have a lifetime of only 200 years under clearcutting); in many places in the USA regeneration has failed completely and repeatedly after such treatment of soils, and there is some evidence that similar failures have been encountered here but suppressed.

There is considerable evidence from many countries that such methods are not sustainable in the long term. Streams suffer correspondingly from increased sedimentation (a 7000 fold increase in sedimentation is typical following clearcutting in the American west), and from eutrophication from high nutrient levels; in some places, such as the recently approved

Manjimup project, there is the danger of salinization which is already prevalent in surrounding areas following agricultural clearing. The much advertised "minimisation" measures do very little to reduce these costs to acceptable levels. Siltation of waterways below the Eden operations are already seriously interfering with aquatic habitats, and with the fishing industry. Strips along streams reduce sedimentation, but do nothing for topsoil loss from higher slopes or nutrient loss, or salinity; and cross drains on tracks do a little to reduce the most obvious erosion, but nothing over most of the area at risk. A marked feature of such projects (and of Australian forestry generally) is the absence of research on and monitoring of such non wood-production matters.

A surprisingly large proportion of Australian forest wildlife depends upon a habitat of mature trees and the holes formed by the early limb dropping habit which is such a characteristic feature of the eucalypt. A large range of birds, bats and arboreal marsupials depend upon this habitat, which is virtually permanently eliminated by clearfelling and continued early cropping of the resulting even-aged stand of forest. Although this elim-

ination of habitat has been described as 'reversible' (e.g. by Moss Cass in accepting the Manjimup EIS*), breaking out of the clear-cut cycle once an even-aged stand was established would depend on persuading forest services not to cut many usable trees and to abandon the even-aged stand — an unlikely eventuality. Hence much wildlife at present found throughout forest areas, will be virtually permanently confined to small remaining 'refuge' areas (where these are left). Not only are the refuge areas of bush strips remaining along streams and in gullies below minimum areas required for much wildlife, but confinement of wildlife to small areas carries the high probability of their eventual elimination from bushfires, particularly in areas like WA where regeneration involves intense summer burns. In fact the Manjimup EIS admits that the Numbat and the Woylie will be eliminated from the woodchip area, and other wildlife populations decimated. Excessive regeneration, a quite common phenomenon, can render the dense regrowth areas unsuitable even for many ground-feeding animals. If woodchip projects reach the levels planned and clearcutting becomes widespread the effects on Australia's forest dwelling fauna (at present the least affected by man) could be severe; many could become much less common than they are today. Large areas of forest will be impoverished.

Projects which involve clearcutting, bulldozing and replacement by plantations of eucalypts will affect many native plants and plant communities. Another threat to these comes from the ideal opportunity such projects present for the accelerated spread of root-rot disease, which in the case of Manjimup is admitted in the EIS to be likely to destroy many plants, such as WA's splendid banksias. Eden and East Gippsland also present serious problems in this respect. Because of the variable seeding properties of eucalypts, regeneration procedures will often tend to favour one species out of a mixture; this will not only reduce diversity but will be likely to lead to problem with insects, since diversity of species often provides protection against insect attack, a serious problem for eucalypts in Australia. Absence of overstorey, even-agedness and reduction in insect-eating birds and bats will contribute to this. The result will certainly be increased use of insecticides.

Recreation and aesthetic values are certain to suffer (see photo) and amenity value in chipped areas will be reduced. Some projects (e.g. in Tasmania) involve important tourist areas. The Manjimup area is admitted in the EIS to be "one of the most important tourist and recreation areas in the state of WA". Because of the large areas required for projects, scarce and precious wilderness areas are often slated for destruction.

One would naturally expect that in compensation for this staggering set of public costs and loss of amenity value of public forests there would be a substantial set of public benefits, at least commercial benefits. The incredible fact is however that there are not. Not only are there no returns to the public purse, the public is actually obliged to provide heavy assistance for these activities. There has been evidence for some time that woodchip projects are not commercially viable without heavy public subsidies. Forestry is generally a financial disaster area from the public viewpoint. The Tasmanian Forestry Commission has admitted in a recent paper by senior employees that the royalties it receives from woodchipping do not meet its regeneration costs and has appealed to the Federal Government for extra assistance. A paper by the NSW Commission giving economic details of the Eden project mysteriously disappeared after it became clear that unsympathetic people were reading forestry papers, and has not since been obtainable in anything resembling its original form. Known royalties for Eden, together with reasonable estimates of reestablishment and other costs, justified the conclusion that the project would make a substantial loss even when the returns from the next rotation were taken into account. With the Manjimup EIS, the first release of some economic data has been made, and the suspicions are confirmed. The EIS makes it clear that Manjimup royalties will do little more than cover the cost of fire protection for the regrowth crop, let alone the substantial increase in staff required to run the project. The cost of the research necessitated by the brutal methods involved, and the cost of the propaganda program required to convince the WA public that its interests are not really being sold out, are likewise to come from the state treasury. The capital cost of the provision of a deep water berth is to be met from public funds. Indirect costs will accrue through heavy use of public roads (also affecting tourism) and subsidized use of the railways. The EIS makes no attempt to argue that returns from the next rotation will cover any of these costs at a reasonable rate of return. The project is completely for export. While there may be a slender case for a subsidized domestic industry

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EVEN ASKIN CARES

The Newcastle Sydney Wollongong urban and industrial sprawls are more than well endowed with their share of "conservation crises", arising virtually by definition, being cities, and, as such the nuclei for population growth and industrial expansion. Proximity to the sea, is of course, an indispensable asset, but its value is likely to fall considerably as the sea suffers continual assaults on its purity and productivity. The rest of the state also partakes in numerous "crises", these generally in the guise of "development". Recent issues of note in NSW have been (amongst others) the Eden woodchipping controversy; beach mining on various areas of the North coast (Myall Lakes National Park); timber cutting in the states last remaining rain forests (Wiangarra State Forest); dumps of mining wastes on the Illawarra escarpment (near Maddens Plains); desecration of wilderness areas by mining and by pipeline and service corridors; continual housing pressures on all vantage points on the accessible coastline (together with its many contingencies); the continuing encroachment of overseas buyers onto North Coast land "at any price"; and the threatened spread of urban and industrial sprawl into prime recreation areas (Larvis Bay).

The NSW Department of the Environment is the state governments machine for fending off any rash environmentalist who attempts to challenge the attitude towards, the legality of, or the environmental consequences of any action (or inaction) on the part of the bureaucracy. The Department, however, is charged with only token environmental protection responsibilities, and this was reflected in April this year when an employee resigned complaining of environmental inaction, the vastness of the public relations exercise and the Departments negative approach to issues. Closely associated with the Department (by virtue of a common top dog - Mr E.J.Coffey) is the State watchdog on environmental affairs, the State Pollution Control Commission. In contrast to the Department the SPCC appears to have real teeth, which it regularly flashes in great style, but which have yet to be tested in the courts. In its first extensive public enquiry the SPCC reported on the state of pollution at Kooragang Island, in the Hunter River estuary near Newcastle. The SPCC found that development of the Island as a giant industrial estate was in conflict with the best interests of the nearby town of Stockton, and in general to conflict with the most desirable land use of the Island and the local high yield commercial fisheries industry.

Despite the clarity of the recommendations, bated breaths are not called for, since the heavy NSW Dept. of Public Works is unlikely to allow such a large slice of prime industrial land slide out of their laps, even though at least one tenant (a member of the German Bayer group) has been scared off by the possibility of pollution restrictions. The SPCC has such other notable achievements under its belt as the approval of mining at Bungonia, and its conspicuous absence in such major issues as Myall Lakes sand mining and the Eden woodchipping project.

In a recent major advance the NSW Dept of the Environment adopted, as policy, the requirement of an Environmental Impact Assessment for all "major projects". The guidelines for this policy are presently being drawn up, but are known to include only minor changes in the present system of decision making, and to require, minimally, only a summary of the Environmental Impact Assessment to be seen by the Department. The dangers inherent in accepting the concept of the Environmental Impact Assessment as a panacea for all environmental problems are yet to be fully appreciated. The lengthy Assessment prepared by AGL for the trans Australia gas pipeline (which completely outclasses the PMG Assessment for the Black Mountain tower) points to some of the dangers, which although are many, can be attributed to only several main factors:

The developers or their environmental consultants prepare the Assessment and usually have more time, money and effort at their disposal to mould the Assessment to suit their own developmental alternatives; Limitations on time available for public involvement in an Assessment heavily weights the outcome of any public discussion or inquiry;

The decision making authority is often inexperienced in environmental matters, inexperienced in the intricacies of an Assessment and often swayed by dollar dealers. Further, the authority is usually not competent to assess the objectivity of the Assessment or the validity of the conclusions drawn from the facts presented.

Experience with the Environment Impact Assessment in the USA has shown that most Assessments were not rejected or altered by the most senior environmental agencies, yet several of these projects have resulted in significant environmental degradation, albeit local, but nonetheless predictable.

Environmental law in NSW where any exists, is fragmentary, often of a general and insecure nature, and its administration and responsibilities disseminated amongst a host of Government departments (Health, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Fisheries, Environment, Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board etc.). Such dissemination of authority makes coordination and implementation of environmental law a lengthy and difficult process, often creating serious rifts between departments. However, overcoming these difficulties and under the Clean Waters Act of 1970, the NSW Government, in a show of strength, recently prosecuted a Granville company over the pumping of 5,500 gallons of sludge into Duck Creek. The company was fined \$150 plus costs (rates for commercial disposal vary between 8 and 15 cents per gallon).

Of course such great progress by the state bureaucracy does not pass unnoticed by conservation groups, particularly those larger Sydney based national groups like Total Environment Centre and Ecology Action, together with others in their style such as the NSW Conservation Society, Nature Conservation Council of NSW and the Wildlife Preservation Trust of Australia. These groups generally rely heavily on sympathetic publicity, public interest campaigns, and high level attacks on the bureaucratic and political machine, and as such follow the fairly traditional approaches to conservation, and fit well into that particular character role.

Quite apart from these bodies, but nonetheless extremely valuable, there exists the local residents action group, usually critically concerned over single issues at any one time.

These local groups (eg "Avalon Preservation Trust", or the colourful and unpretentious "Battlers for Kelly's Bush" to name but two of the dozens) serve to bring issues to the notice of both local decision making authorities and other environmental bodies, and play an invaluable role in the recognition of progressive but relatively innocuous, local degradation of environmental attributes.

The effectiveness, however, of the traditional approach to conservation issues is increasingly becoming questionable. With these doubts about the movement as a whole, with a common interest in coastal zone management problems, disillusioned with other Sydney groups, but inspired by the field work and original research being carried out by a relatively successful Queensland group (Queensland Littoral Society), a small band of students, biologists and naturalists formed a new society, the Australian Littoral Society (NSW Division) while QLS was renamed ALS (Old Division).

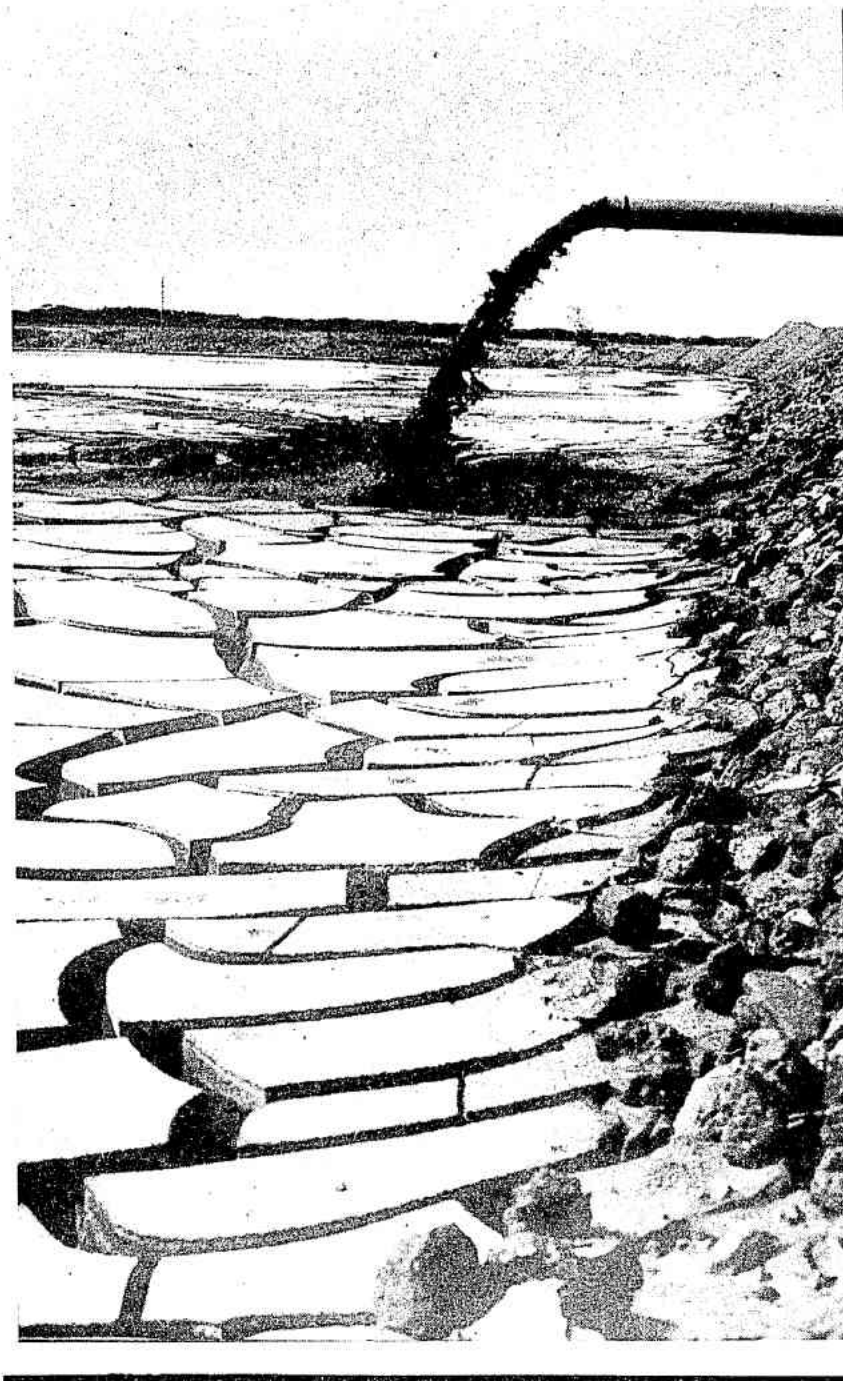
After less than 18 months of operation, membership of the NSW Division has grown to near 150, most of these comprising biologists from Universities, Government departments and Museums, together with students at all levels, many active naturalists and a number of sympathisers. The primary aim of the Society is effective conservation, through education and field research of those coastal zone areas under most pressure from urban, industrial and rural development. Of special concern are the quiet water estuaries, where productivity is high and whose protection and nourishment is required by a great number of species of commercial significance.

Prior to the formation of the NSW Division of ALS, it was painfully apparent that there was no other body interested, or capable, of studying the estuarine wetland areas on the NSW coastline. To fill this gap the society has concentrated on creating an experienced field team, which is now in great demand for the study of threatened wetland areas. In fact the society is now beginning to hold the trump cards, since the expertise available within the societies membership is such that responsible developers are now inviting the societies participation in the planning or study of proposed developments. Studies by the field team are coordinated by several senior scientists, and are designed to be as factual and objective as possible. In its brief history the NSW Division has been involved in several lengthy environmental controversies, including a twelve month study of Careel Bay, Pittwater for Warringah Shire Council and Uniserach Ltd., and has given submissions and advice on a host of smaller issues.

The days of conservation through the arousal of public sympathy are decidedly numbered, and, although this will always play some role, the battle with the bureaucracy over Environmental Impact Assessment will shortly become the deciding factor in most major issues. It is here, where facts, and not fancy, will achieve effective conservation, ensuring the rational utilization of all our resources.

The alternative conservation movement must overcome the "backlash", regain their lost credibility, and structure their moves to gain maximum efficiency from their own resources.

Trevor Ward.



REFECTORY SNACK BAR MILK BAR

WHY THE PRICE INCREASES!!!!!!

The House Committee, body responsible for pricing in these areas, must work within the Board's policy objective of breaking even in the Refectory with a **SUBSIDY** of the trading surplus from the Union Shop, Snack Bar and Milk Bar.

FACTS

Since the last increase in prices in these areas in November, 1972 there has been

- (i) An increase of approximately 35% in Wage Bill in these areas
- (ii) An average increase of 20% in Material costs e.g. in meat, the increases have been sharper than 20%

Quarterly trading statements show that without the Union Shop **SUBSIDY** these areas are losing \$11,309 and with the Shop subsidy areas are losing \$5,353.

ALTERNATIVES TO ENABLE BREAK EVEN BY END OF YEAR

- (i) A reduction in the range of meals available in the Refectory to possibly one or two dishes. This was felt to be undesirable as it required a savage cut in services.
- (ii) An increase in prices for most items in conjunction with a review of hours of operation in the Milk and Snack Bars to eliminate labour costs. The Committee made this recommendation to the Union Board. The Union will continue to operate a range of **SUBSIDISED** meals in the 35c to 40c category.

Regretably the Union cannot sustain cost increases indefinitely.

Chris Macphillamy,
On behalf of the House Committee

MOSS CASS

Moss Cass, the Minister for the Environment and Conservation has been described as a middle-aged hippy and a modest, unassuming but completely fearless idealist. He has views on everything, including what he considers to be the over-inflated reputation of LSD, and is frank enough to express them irrespective of embarrassment to the government: Whitlam would have preferred to leave him out of the Cabinet. John Madden, Andrew McCredie and Frank Muller taped this interview with him and a happy time was had by all.

INTERVIEW

Woroni: How great do you think is the environmental awareness of the general public and is this reflected in the views of the ALP?
Cass: I don't think there is much awareness in the general public. In specific terms they might know a bit about one odd situation — Lake Pedder, non-returnable tin cans, the Black Mountain Tower, but they may wonder what the fuss is about. That's about the extent of most of their knowledge.

But there is an increasing awareness that it may involve things more serious, and of more long term significance to the community than all this. Particularly, younger people are getting concerned — school kids as well as university students are concerned about the future. It's not environment in the sense of litter in the streets — it's really concerned about whether we are buggering up the planet.

Woroni: What about the ALP?
Cass: Well, the ALP is no better or worse than anyone else. I think it is a fair sign of the willingness to accept that something needs to be done is that at the last Federal Conference they accepted most of what I put up. The bit that Peter Samuel talked at length about in the Bulletin was bullshit. The essence of policy was accepted without amendment at all. It was just one simplistic statement about alternate life styles which didn't have to be said anyway because it was covered in the rest of it anyway, you know in statements about non-renewable resources and recycling and that sort of stuff.

Woroni: What I noticed about the policy statements was that they were very general. Were you frightened to tackle the Conference with specific policy statements?
Cass: Well, not quite. You think about it.

Those words in the policy statements were not telling us what to do about a specific issue; they are laying down guidelines for any such issue should it ever crop up. If anything pops up, we are now free to judge it on whether it uses non-renewable resources and if so how, and whether it can be recycled. Now you don't want to be more specific than this because that's what was wrong with the Labor Party in the older days when they said "We'll nationalise this", and ten years or twenty years later when we've got the power to do it, it's irrelevant. That's not what you're after anyway. The word "nationalise" is garbage. What you have to do is utilise the resource or plan the service for the maximum benefit of the community. Sometimes it may be more worker participation, other times it may be that you say "No, you can't do that because you have no right to use that resource in that way".

Now the policy as we have adopted allows me, or any member of the government if he's so motivated, to determine priorities in terms that are quite reasonable. I would much rather have it that way than have a specific statement on a factory somewhere or an oil refinery. I want to worry about all oil refineries anywhere.

Lake Pedder

Woroni: What do you see as the significance of Lake Pedder?
Cass: Lake Pedder? ... Well ... Mainly it'll be a lesson for us for the future. There is nothing we can do directly — the decisions have been taken, all the dams have been built. If I win the debate, I guess, we will be able to provide for the moratorium and then we'll see what comes from that. It may show that the Lake can be saved. But even if I don't succeed, and please don't therefore interpret this as suggesting I don't think we will or I don't want to win which is the usual way newspaper interpret my statements because I'm just trying to be careful not to inflate people's expectations unreasonably. Of course I hope we save the Lake and there are several points for this.

I think the extent of the enterprise is unnecessary for Tasmania at the moment. They could well do without that amount of electricity in my opinion based on the facts available to me at the moment. But maybe it will change Lake Pedder was significant because it is a unique bit of water in a setting and situation which in the long run would be worth, quite apart from the aesthetic value and what I might emotionally feel about it, in the narrow Tas-

manian point of view, it would have been more valuable left as a nature reserve. I am convinced that in 50 years from now the Gordon scheme won't be worth looking at, but by God if Lake Pedder was still there people would come from all over the place to look at it.

Woroni: You feel that is more significant than the fact that they will be producing more electricity that will require huge industries to be built up to use it?

Cass: Well, I'm quite sceptical whether they will succeed in doing that anyway so that doesn't worry me overmuch. Most of the electricity now, so I'm told, is consumed by 2 industries. Electrolytic Zinc and Comalco between them consume more than 50% of the power generated — I think its 60%. Well, Christ if you're going to get another one like that well its highly unlikely. They have had this potential available for many years now and they have been staying around looking for the appropriate industry and they haven't found one yet. They talk about the Uranium enrichment plant well, I'm buggered if I see it being built down there, when Uranium is way up North anyhow, and there is plenty of power and water up North. I would guess, but in any case who wants it. I'm sure Rex Conner would think a long time before he thinks of establishing a Uranium enrichment plant in Tasmania.

Woroni: What do you think of the principle of the polluter pays?
Cass: Well, you don't have to be revolutionary to accept it — I think everyone does, but how you implement it. Shorn of excess verbiage it simply means that the cost of any product must represent not only the cost of producing it, but the cost to the community in terms of the value of the resource which maybe non-renewable that is being used — and the value of recycling if you want to recycle on the value of getting rid of the pollution it might cause — the whole damn lot.

Woroni: But...
Cass: I said should we, should we in terms of the environment, should we have cars, in terms of surviving another 200 years? Should we have motor cars?

Woroni: Ah...no...
Cass: Well, there's your answer.

Woroni: But our entire cities are based on the car.
Cass: Well we're going to have to start quickly changing the basis of transport in cities.

Woroni: Would you see the 5% surcharge on petrol as a step in that direction?
Cass: Well an incidental gesture because we needed to raise money, but a very painful one as far as we were concerned because it was a trend in the right direction anyhow.

Woroni: Why wouldn't it, say have been made 10 or 20 percent?
Cass: Oh, well, you have to have the political guts — it was not primarily devised as an environmental ploy, lets be honest, it was a technique for raising money for the social structure.

Woroni: But you are saying we should eliminate cars, you are saying the polluter should pay, but I don't see any real instance of this occurring.
Cass: Well we haven't done it yet. I'm not pretending we have.

Woroni: Does the Labor Party intend to do it?
Cass: Oh well yes, we have got to look into it. These are some of the things we are going to have to investigate.

Impact Statements

Woroni: What do you see as the function of your ministry at this moment and in the future?
Cass: Well, if I've got my profits hot on I'd say to save the world, but you're not allowed to quote that without a smile on your face because I make it with a smile on that. But if people who feel that if we don't get concerned about the environment, and what we're doing to life mightn't survive here for more than a couple of hundred years. But that's long term policy and not what I'm going to achieve. But what I've got to do is start awakening people and the government and myself. I'm not pre-

tending that I know all the answers at all, but I still do stupid things from an environmental point of view like everybody else. We want to start awakening the consciousness of the community on these things through the Department perhaps setting up research projects to try and understand where the problems are, what the possible solutions might be, coordinate or collaborate with the other departments to sort of check on the things they want to do and to try and point out the environmentally hazardous aspects of whatever projects they might have in mind. And so on. I'm not in a position to say "Thou shalt" because that goes right against the whole ethic of this economy, doesn't it? The basic point of course is the whole business of progress. Is it worthwhile?

Woroni: The N.C.D.C. Molonglo Parkway Impact Statement didn't live up to many peoples expectations of what an impact statement should be like. What do you see as the functions of impact statements and who should prepare them?
Cass: The same way that one was prepared. As they're criticised publicly we get more aware of what ought to be in them. That's the third one of any significance that's been produced. Black Mountain was the first. Googong was the second. Then Molonglo. They're brand new enterprises. Of course. They're going to be deficient. We don't know how to do it, we haven't even drawn up guidelines yet, we're still debating those. But the mere fact that they've been published and people have been able to criticise them serves as a means of educating us as to how to do it properly next time.

Woroni: Should the department or group doing the project produce the impact statement?
Cass: Yes. Because I know people think I ought to be the policeman sitting over the top of it all but, I'd never get time to scratch myself if I'm going to check up on everybody. And in any case shouldn't the project be planned initially in an environmentally sensitive way? Now that's what you're aiming for. That is why the Department doing it should draw up the impact statement because in the process of drawing up the impact statement they may ask themselves the question, "Is it worthwhile?" which often I suspect, is never asked. Look at the submerging of Lake Pedder. Is it necessary? Its a fundamental question.

Woroni: Do you ever see Australia playing a leading role like the Scandinavian countries?
Cass: I hope so. There's been a change of government. Well I think in the past six months we have started to say a few things in a few places that have not been said in the past, for many years. I mean we even equivocated on the whaling issue last year. We took one stand at the Stockholm Conference and another at the International Whaling Commission. At least we were a bit consistent this year, after a bit of a mix-up we finally come down in favour of the moratorium, even amongst the whaler's and against our own best interests in terms of the local industry in Western Australia.

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Woroni: What's your department's role with the impact statement? The other Department produces it...
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Woroni: What about the Jarvis Bay nuclear reactor?
Cass: Bullshit

Woroni: What do you see as Australia's major energy resources of the future?
Cass: Sunlight.

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Woroni: Do you think that ecological activists are being too hysterical in their demands?
Cass: Oh, sometimes a lot of the Labor Party are pretty extremist. (Laughs) And a lot of Capitalists are pretty extremist. We are emotional animals with all our bullshit about being cold and logical, we are in fact governed by our emotions and people who feel strongly about things almost inevitably feel passionately. Passionately being not all that objective all the time.

Woroni: The whole crisis has highlighted problems of international cooperation in environmental situations. What do you see as Australia's role in general here?
Cass: First of all overcoming the battle within Australia itself, because once again there is the whalers who want to keep going. That is a problem. Threats that a whole town is going



All life depends upon preying on some other form of life. The whole bloody thing goes 'roun n' roun n' roun in a

circle doesn't it with the worm eating you when you're dead. So who the hell do you think you are.

to be killed if we stop the whaling industry. So we have got to solve that problem within itself. At the same time, of course, I think we should be joining in the international discussion on this and making the points that we did — despite the protests and anxieties about the Australian Whaling industry, making the point that it is just an unnecessary industry. And if people want to then we better breed the whales first, because at the rate we are going there will not be any to knock off soon.

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this is the end of it. There will have to be a new submission to cabinet. It will have to be reviewed. There have been lots of criticisms of the ACF and there is no doubt about that. I have made mine public and that stirred a fair bit of dust. It is also true that as a result of that, quite apart from the stories about who talked to whom in Ottawa or wherever it was... Washington, I also talked to people here. I got some very intelligent letters from quite prominent people who are concerned about the whole business. And I had to concede the point that there had been no general election of officers of the ACF there since we gained power. A lot of the rank and file are fed up and I suppose it is not unreasonable to see if they can set their own house in order. So whatever the reasons why I had to backtrack it was also perhaps not an unreasonable thing to do.

Woroni: inherent in the organisation are certain Constitutional difficulties...
Cass: But what if they changed the constitution?

Woroni: Well they just had a referendum, but a three-quarters majority was required. The responses in favour of the amendments were between 62% and 67%.

Cass: I have talked with some who were aware of that, and in fact I talked with at least two who conceded that it would be quite unreasonable to adopt the changes despite the fact that the constitution had not been fulfilled, because quite clearly it was the sentiments of the rank and file. Now these pennies have dropped it now remains to be seen what happens in their elections in, I think, October or November. And I can still have the last word. If they are still going along the same track no damn different and a lot of conservationists are upset, well, next year when I bring it to Cabinet I will recommend appropriately.

Woroni: What do you see as an alternative direction to fund money; to other bodies?
Cass: Ironically into a national conservationist body. This is another reason why if you can reform themselves it is good, because I would only want to set one up anyway. Because I don't want to be bothered being the whipping post for all the various conservationist groups. I much rather they worked it all out amongst themselves and worked out their own priorities and then presented a case to the government. We want to be cooperative, but I am buggered if we want to be an arbitrator.

Woroni: Jarvis Bay is tied up with the Atomic Bomb—
Cass: Well I'm not interested in that. Bombs are useless. They don't do anything for anybody except create worries.

Woroni: Not is it being pushed...?
Cass: But by us. It hasn't come up for discussion and no one in our party would want to be bothered with it. Rex Connors even wants to leave the uranium buried right where it is, for a while. He acknowledges that we may need to use it, he doesn't want to mine it now.

A.C.F.
Woroni: What about the Australian Conservation Foundation?
Cass: It is true that they are getting this year what they got last year. It is also true that this year is the last year of the five year agreement they received from John Gorton, to support them. True he only offered them \$50,000 and Billy McMahon upped it to \$150,000 but

Black Mountain
Woroni: Why is Black Mountain Tower being built despite the fact that there seems no sound reason for it?
Cass: Oh well, because the decision was taken before we got in...

Woroni: Yes, but it is true that you could have changed it.
Cass: Well, I could have, well I couldn't, I suppose the cabinet could have. But one is reluctant to ... Its a difficult, embarrassing situation. It depends on people's aesthetic appreciation. Let's be honest, there are a lot of people who think that bloody big erection will be lovely. You know, they'll lie back in their beds in the morning and feel good because even if they can't manage it, there it is up there (laughter). They do, some people think it is marvellous.

Woroni: Yes, but it is destroying part of the hillside...
Cass: Yes, but don't be too bound up with that. I was careful not to push that, because I knew bloody well I could be laughed at, because it is claimed there are photographs in existence showing Black Mountain bare. Photography has not been going all that long. In other words that is a fairly recent regeneration, so never mind all this bullshit about a great unspoiled environmental spot that has been up there for ever and a day.

Woroni: But you are taking some of the park away — you are building a carpark, a freeway...
Cass: I concede that. But some because of the fact that it was once pasture land anyway, because it is seen as necessary to make Canberra a tourist centre, with that revolving thing around where the scrotum would be... For these reasons I tread carefully on it. In fact my whole attack was based on the technological necessity for it. I am still convinced that it is unnecessary. That I think is true, but I couldn't persuade people. I nearly did as you probably have heard, because everybody

is talking about it. Caucus nearly swung over. So it was not bad when nearly six months ago they would have laughed if I had suggested that it would be likely.

Woroni: It seems amazing that it was gone ahead with because compared with the alternatives it is so expensive.
Cass: Because too many still accept the argument that it is expensive, but it is necessary to ensure the radio-telephone communication link between Sydney-Camberra and Melbourne.

Woroni: But that was shown to be wrong.
Cass: To you, and to me, but not to everybody else. You cannot deny that at the moment we have not the technology to implement it tomorrow. We still need dishes. The post-office has been able to prove that we are going to need so many dishes by 1980. Now in fact they could have all set on top of Red Hill. But lets be honest. At various times NCDC has said we don't want anything on top of Red Hill. DCA, I don't know whether because they meant it or whether they wanted to back NCDC, said they didn't want obstructions on the top of Red Hill because of air safety reasons. To now suddenly change the whole bloody argument over, as I tried to do, and say, heck, NCDC doesn't object to something on the top of Red Hill — it took a long time for them to admit but at last they did, but it was too late. We had three debates on it and they were not prepared to come clean and say we don't need Red Hill clear in the foreseeable future. Right to the very end, they wanted to say eventually we do. People aren't game enough to look that far ahead — they should have shut up and said, having confidence in the technology — we don't mind, because 15 years from now everyone will realise that it is not necessary. That's my point, but I didn't manage to persuade them, they didn't believe it. They don't believe...

Woroni: A lot of people don't understand that when you talk about broad-band communication one little wire coming from your telephone like that you know a little box and the same sort of wire except coaxial cable or fibreglass number and can get the variety — radio, TV programs from the other side of the world, conference hookups, everything, but people can't understand this.

Woroni: There does seem to be a definite anti-environment lobby in the Labor Party?
Cass: Don't be too tough on the Labor Party. There is an anti-environment lobby in the whole community in the sense that they see environmental arguments as always anti-progress. You wouldn't do so well in the Liberal Party I'm telling you. One bloke there started talking outright about the need to play and so on, and that was Andrew Peacock. I know because my Press Secretary was Andrew's at the time and he wrote Andrew's speech. It was the last speech Andrew Peacock made on that topic and Blazey now works for me. Obviously everyone wants to hammer the Labor Party, but it's the community who needs to understand these issues. After all let's remember that there are a number of parliamentarians on the Labor Party side who are very pro-environment because they feel the Labor Party in fact won votes on environmental issues. Fellows like David McKenzie, Tony Lamb, Race Matthews, John Coates, just to name a few, there are probably more, oh Barry Cohen feels it was probably significant in his electorate.

Woroni: You don't feel you have alienated any of the older members in the Labor Party?
Cass: Oh yes, sure, yes, as I have alienated a lot of older people in the community, because to them, I am talking a whole lot of bullshit — middle-class trendy stuff.

Population
Woroni: What are your views on an optimum population for Australia?
Cass: Well I don't know what the figure is, but I was interested to see at the ANZAAS Conference that some bloke produced a paper showing that based on the arable land, not the land which is now being farmed, but the possible arable land in Australia, bearing in mind rainfall and soil types and so on, Australia optimally could feed 60 million people. He didn't say we could support a population of that size, he said that if we had 40 million here we could export food for 20 million. That's on arable land. If you add to that the water requirements for the population living here, and what you use to grow crops in addition to what you need to water cities. If you add the water needs for the community then the population ceiling is around 36 million for Australia. I know there are some, like Colin Clarke who talk about population ceilings of 120 million, lovely, but I don't know what he is talking about, unless you are doing it to burn up a hell of a lot of power distilling water, and I am just not convinced that is practicable. That is such a waste of resources. Obviously Australia needs a policy on population.

Woroni: What are your thoughts on drugs?
Cass: I am vehemently opposed to anyone using any drugs at all, including marijuana, but given that I am not God and therefore I cannot stop people using drugs and it would seem that people want to use drugs for all sorts of reasons, I think having penalties placed on drug use just makes the problem worse. I would far rather remove the penalties from all including hard drugs and face up to the problem of those who use any drugs in excess, and let's face it, the most extensively used drugs in excess are not heroin, but alcohol, ordinary cigarettes, barbiturates and tranquilisers all of them legally available; and the people who overuse them obviously have problems. Instead of chasing them as criminals we should be treating them as sick people. That's my stand.

Woroni: In a party policy platform could you ever see the controlling of the drug situation taken away from the police force?
Cass: Well, not as a party policy because it is a health matter and I hope we will do it through the health department someday. Take it right out of the hands of the customs department and shove it right where it belongs, with the medical profession and social workers and so on, and psychologists because it is a psychological problem, I think in varying degrees. You and I might try it just for kicks and it doesn't mean any thing, but lots of people can't stop once they get started, and they just do it — they don't have to be coaxed to do it, they just do it because they are looking for something.

Woroni: We have a problem, that students get concerned about environmental issues at university, they go and graduate and get a job and they usually find their job is in contradiction to their ideals...
Cass: (sighing). It's the same the whole world over, (laughter)

Woroni: Is it in this sense that the environment debate is mainly a middle-class centred debate lacking any guts, because the conflicts don't extend beyond the individual's conscience mostly of the time?
Cass: That may be partly true but that doesn't alter the reality, it must extend beyond that or else we are all doomed. So you just have to hope that for every thousand students who go out and forget their morals a hundred might remember.

Woroni: What about Zero Growth Rate for Australia?
Cass: The views some people have is that the only measure of progress is more and more and more and more. We just want to get across the view that it is just working hard to stand still. Why not relax and stand still. Our so-called progress is not on balance getting us very much further ahead in any way. Sociologically, there are all these break-downs in society. People aren't happier if they're richer. It depends on how you define progress. If you measure it by the number of cars you see in the dump then we are pretty progressive; but if you measure by whether people have happier lives longer, if they have fewer crack-ups in their personal relationships. I am not talking about divorce. I don't care if people play merry-go-rounds in their sex life. The point is are they happy about it. That is what is relevant. We're obviously a far from happy society.



QUEEN vs CASS

Startling scenes were witnessed at the Supreme Court this morning prior to the much publicised trial of one Cass, claimed by a usually reliable source to be a Minister for the Environment. As the trial was about to begin, a lynching party led by a large man identified by some observers as a member of a Black Mountain Committee, attempted to execute the accused on a guillotine hastily erected in the body of the Court. Only the gallant intervention of an unknown academic, who assured the assembled throng that he was the Sub-Dean of the Law Faculty, prevented a hideous miscarriage of justice. In an impassioned oration he rendered section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution in hexameters. In the resultant dispute with the lynching party about the applicability of section 92 of the Cass case, a Tipstaff extricated the accused from the crowd around the guillotine. A small salvo of gas shells fired by the ACT police soon cleared the Court. Shortly afterwards, the trial began before Mr. Justice Precedent. When His Honour had adjusted his gas mask, the Prosecutor, Mr Hardinge Giffard, Q.C. rose and addressed the Court:

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

May it please the Court, this is an historic case. It is the first prosecution under the Preservation of the Environment Act, recently passed by the legislature. Section 4 of this Act makes it an offence to damage the quality of the environment in any way, while section 5 provides stringent penalties for those who are accomplices in the commission of such offences.

Precedent, J.

What is the environment, Mr Giffard?

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

Just a figure of speech, Your Honour, just a figure of speech.

The Attorney-General (By leave for the accused Cass)

If Your Honour pleases, my client should be immediately acquitted. How can he be charged with harming a figure of speech?

The Attorney-General

Lake Pedder is in Tasmania which is not part of Australia. In any event, it has a Labor government.

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

The accused has done nothing to preserve Bungonia Gorge, in New South Wales, from destruction by limestone quarrying.

The Attorney-General

But the Commonwealth Constitution restrains my client from interfering in the affairs of the Sovereign state of New South Wales.

Precedent, J.

This Court has never heard of the Commonwealth Constitution. It it had, it would hold it invalid as an unlawful and pretended invasion of the prerogatives of the Crown.

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

And then there is the Molonglo Parkway, in Canberra, designed to destroy the beauty of Lake Burley Griffin and the habitat of numerous water birds and platypuses. The accused is privy to this proposal.

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

My learned Junior tells me that the environment has to do with the quality of life, Your Honour.

Precedent, J.

Surely the environment is like God. Some people believe in it, but nobody can define it.

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

The prosecution case, Your Honour, is that the accused committed offences against the Preservation of the Environment Act by permitting the destruction of the environment, when seized with the duty, as Minister of the Crown for the Environment, of preserving the quality of the environment. This is a very serious matter, and the legislature has very properly provided that it should be a capital offence. (Groans, hisses, cries of "Impeach Richard Milhous Nixon!")

Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

The prosecution will call witnesses to show that the accused, whilst Minister for the Environment, acquiesced in the plans for the destruction of the summit of Black Mountain, by constructing thereon an obscene phallus, sometimes referred to as the Post Office Tower, an erection which is not only calculated to destroy natural ecology of Black Mountain itself, but which also constitutes a massive act of visual pollution, destroying the natural skyline of Canberra.

The Attorney-General

But the opponents of the Tower project are notoriously Labor Party academics, Your Honour, who should be suppressed. In any event, my client opposed the project but was overruled by his colleagues in Cabinet.

Precedent, J.

That is no defence. The accused was Minister for the Environment. His duty was to prevent its destruction. He cannot hide behind his colleagues.

The Attorney-General

But the Department of the Environment has no real power, and its establishment was mere window dressing to catch the support of the younger voters. It is not intended to actually do anything of a positive nature to protect the environment, particularly as this would bring it into conflict with other government departments involved in its destruction.

Precedent, J.

The accused cannot plead politics in this Court.

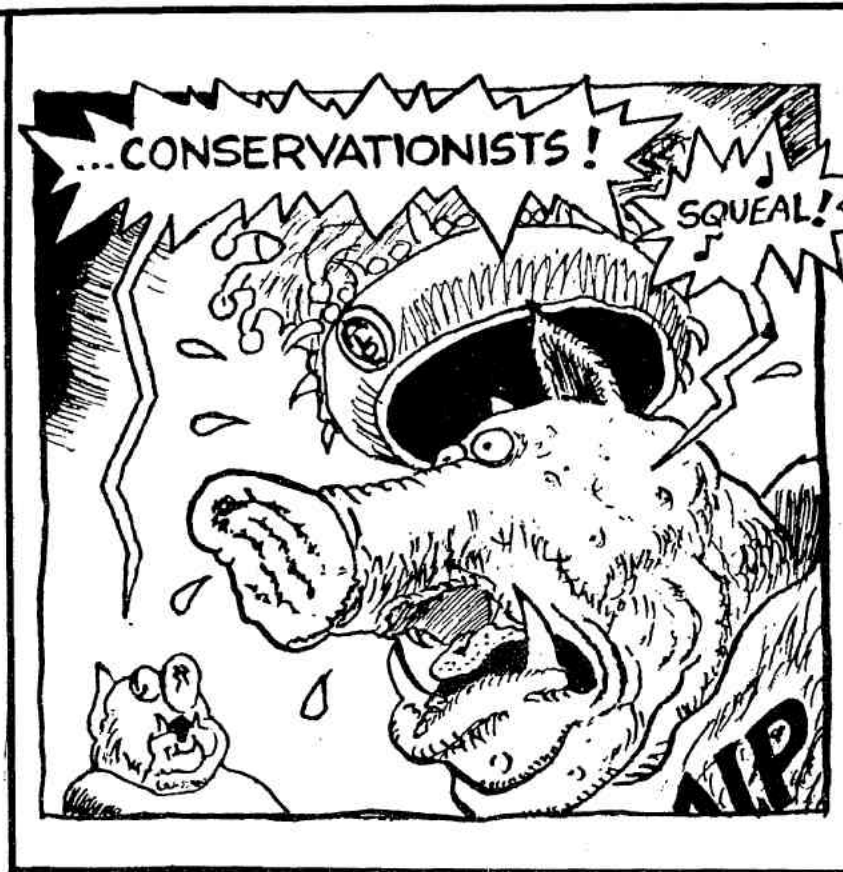
Hardinge Giffard, Q.C.

Furthermore, the accused has done nothing to save Lake Pedder from destruction by flooding in the name of Hydro-Electricity.

Precedent, J.

The Court has heard enough. I shall pass sentence on the accused without hearing the witnesses.

But before sentence could be passed the proceedings were brought to an abrupt end by the appearance of part of a large communications tower through the wall of the Court, which had collapsed under the impact. It appears that during the proceedings one Bowen, a Post Master, had attempted to lower, from a helicopter, a pre-fabricated tower onto the summit of Black Mountain. Due to an unforeseen technical error the tower was inadvertently dropped onto the Law Courts, causing their immediate destruction.



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The Australian Department of Labour has vacancies in all States for psychologists for vocational guidance work in 1974. Suitably qualified applicants will be selected as follows:

- Those lacking previous relevant work experience will undergo 12 months' intensive training in the Department immediately following engagement. During the year approximately 9 weeks will be spent at a central course in Melbourne
- Those who have had previous experience in vocational guidance or allied work may be exempted from part or all of the training course. It is anticipated that some applicants in this category will be placed in available positions immediately following engagement.

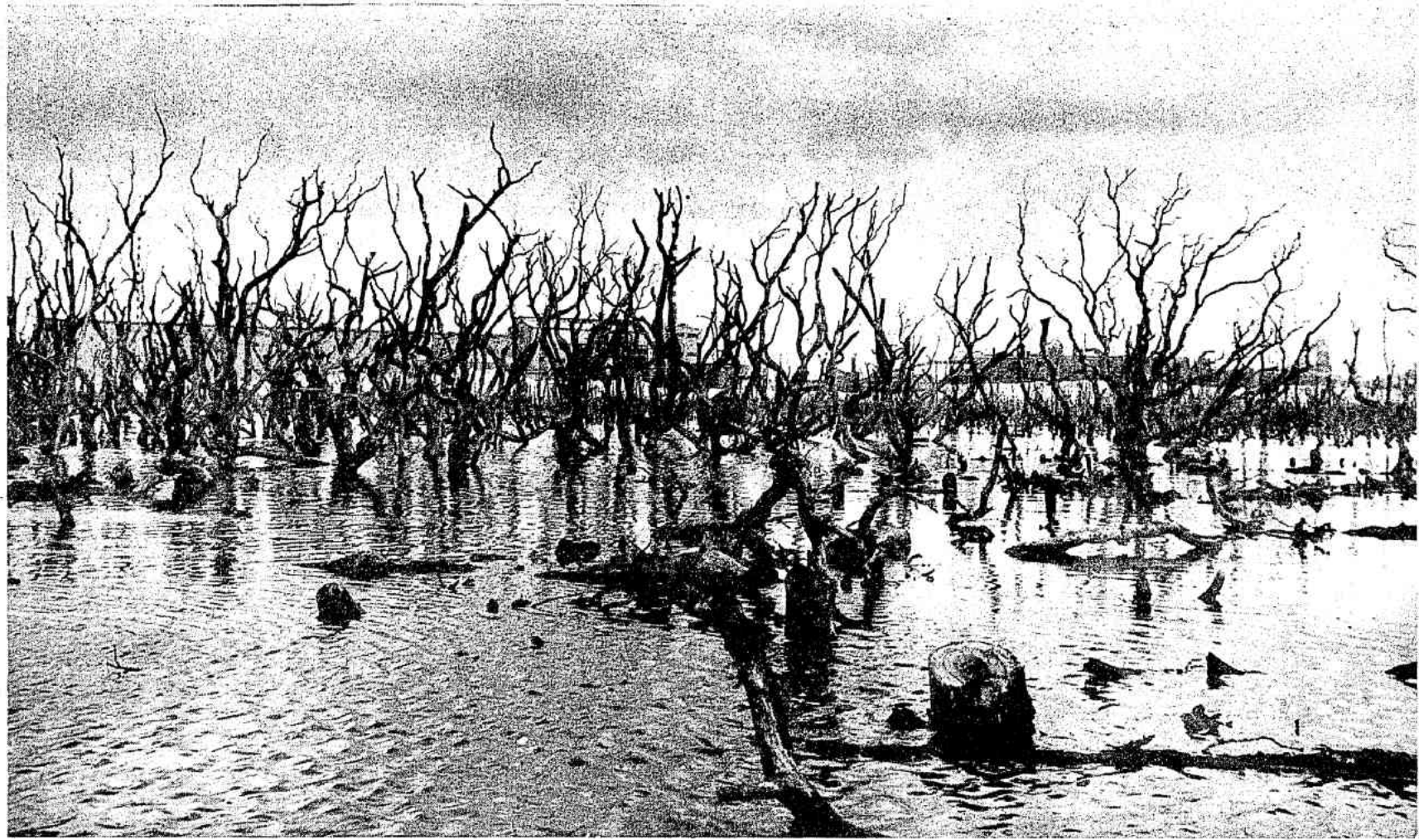
Qualifications
A university degree with a major in Psychology is the minimum requirement, and students who will complete this qualification in 1973 may apply. A fourth year qualification and/or previous experience would be an advantage.

Salary
Commencing salary ranges from \$5434 for a pass degree to \$5873 for a first class honours degree, with the maximum of the range being \$8290.

Appointment
On satisfactory completion of training, psychologists will be appointed to vacancies as they occur in the Department's Vocational Guidance Service, which has units in all States, the Northern Territory and Canberra.

Further information and application forms are available from the Regional Director, Department of Labour, or the Public Service Inspector, in each State. Applications should be submitted to:
The Secretary
Department of Labour
PO Box 2817AA
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

By: 21/9/73



Above

The NSW public works department would call it "unclaimed land". Interested parties were concerned that members of the public had noticed the state of this mangrove swamp - the solution - chop down what's left.

Below left Sullivans Ck?

Below right Captains Flat



ANU UNION

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

Applications from the general membership of the Union are invited to fill the following positions on the Union Committees as listed below:

House Committee	:	2 positions
Bar Committee	:	1 position (possible vacancy as from 17/9/73)
Development Committee	:	4 positions
Discipline Committee	:	4 positions

Union members who are members of the Board or are employed by the Union are not eligible to apply.

In addition to the above stipulation, members of the Discipline Committee cannot be members of other Union Committees.

All Nominees are requested to appear before the Board for interview at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 17th September, when they should be prepared to state their qualifications orally and/or in writing.

NATURE NIBBLES with Jack

Once again I find myself haunched in the Union Bar scratching my inebriated backside and attempting to put pen to paper.

However before I begin rambling I would like to deny any responsibility, whatsoever, for any of the foregoing raves in this Woroni. We didn't really want to waste twelve pages on an environment issue (a well justified stand if you bothered to read any of the articles), still it didn't seem a bad idea at the time since it meant that I could have spent another week drunk.

Outside the window of the Bar my gaze is often transfixed upon a delightful trickle of sewerage which masquerades under the rather pretentious title of Sullivans Creek. Many is the happy hour I have whiled away perusing the Creek counting how many sacred beer cans, turds and dead cats float past.

The smell of the water is somewhat difficult to describe but it is certainly original — one can whiff taints of stormwater sewerage, petrol leaks and a multitude of different industrial wastes from Dickson. In short there is something for every palate.

Sullivan's Creek serves more purpose than just a visual joy though. Clever plumbing has

enabled the Refectory, to capture a cheap source of water to cook vegetables in, even the Sports Union recognises the economic feasibility and has completely cut out its bill for shower water.

Why the Union Bistro is called Sullies is a matter of conjecture however and I would not like to speculate on this point. Perhaps the easiest way to find out is to indulge in a meal there.

The Sports Union has persuaded Property and Plans to dam Sullivans Creek below the University Avenue bridge to enable members to enjoy a midday swim during the summer months. What a fantastic idea! A good time is promised for all — I can just envisage the happy hordes joyfully throwing beer cans at each other, assaulting passing strangers with deceased dogs and pissing in the creek.

Even the piscians have a fine habitat in Sullivans. When I rang the University Zoologist last week to ascertain why there were so many fish thrashing the surface of the pond opposite Ursulas and why there were scores of dead fish in the area, he informed me that the dirty beasts were only indulging in their annual screwing and the seagulls were annihilating the ones that got more carried away.

I really can't see why people object to the French Bomb Tests. They are really a quite nice race of people and nobody gets really hurt besides the odd mutant kid and the various unfortunate weekend hippy whose hair all falls out (nuclear fall out?).

The Chinese had much more style. They didn't bother telling anyone beforehand and then exploded it next to the Indian border which, you must admit, is one way to begin on the long path towards zero population growth.

Another so-called environmental issue which is of no consequence is the rubbish which is being spouted about can recycling. Stubbies might be okay but cans don't break when you drop them. It's all a question of priorities, and any real Australian knows where his priorities should be. The can is an Australian Institution.

The Black Mountain Tower isn't all bad either. Imagine all those pretty lights you could see from the top of the Tower when you're stoned.

If all the people opposed to the Tower were dead serious they should save their money from being wasted on court actions and invest in dynamite instead. Then wait till the Tower is built and blow it up and destroy the environment completely.

I don't think the government would build another one.

I'm also glad to see the Molonglo Freeway being built as it will make it very hard to get to the Staff Centre which is still serving shit-house food, has various obnoxious members on its staff and takes a quarter of an hour to serve a beer.

But wj all know where the true eco-freaks went don't we? To Nimbin.

Last report from there says that the creek is being eroded due to all the stones removed from the creekbed and left scattered all over the site. The creek is polluted anyway now. The toilet holes have all sunk three feet since they were filled in and when all the rain finally came those hippies who were left couldn't get back to their city pads fast enough, leaving all they couldn't carry behind.

Yours, naturally,
Jack Growford.



"I knew this would happen if those damned conservationists had their way!"

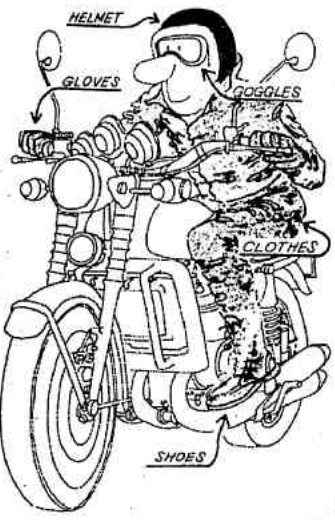


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Continued from page 4

directed to supplying essential needs, there is no case at all, given Australia's balance of trade situation, for a heavily subsidized export industry which exploits a public resource and which involves heavy environmental costs and no public benefits.

The usual case (and indeed one of the few non-trivial economic benefits cited in the EIS) for such projects is their 'indirect benefits', namely their provision of 'decentralised employment', in this case for 350 people. But there is a certain eventual conflict with tourism, a far more harmless and important employer than forestry (which American studies have shown even in minor tourist states to earn \$10 for every \$1 earned by the forest industries), and which also adds to decentralisation. WA has no unemployment problem, and there have been recent complaints about the small cut-back in the immigration program leading to a shortage of workers. The employment provided by woodchip schemes is of low quality and its numbers exaggerated. For example, the woodchipping and subsequent degradation of half Australia's forests would employ only .2% of the total workforce, reducing to .1% by 2000 — a poor bargain. And since the main argument for decentralisation is its supposed addition to the quality of life, it seems strange to decrease the quality and amenity of one of the most attractive aspects of the natural environment, the native forests, for 99.9% of the workforce in order to provide low quality decentralised employment for .1%. The employment justification depends basically upon a principle of provision of employment at almost any cost, commercial or environmental, and is a thinly disguised attempt to present development as a welfare measure.

If these industries have no public benefits, but only overwhelming costs, both commercial and environmental, it seems reasonable to ask why public forest services are pursuing them and promoting them. The answer is that not everyone loses. The forest services themselves

gain through expansion, and the forest industries gain; there is very strong evidence, both political and economic (presented in detail in our book*) that forest services act largely in the interests of the forest industries. Forest services regard themselves as "the forest section of the industry", strongly identify with the forest industries and their interests (to the exclusion of other conflicting interests), and have close contacts with the forest industries. They are very responsive to their demands and requirements. The ideology of pursuit of maximum quantities of wood — regardless of economics or welfare — with non wood-production matters receiving only verbal attention, also serves those interests. The ideology is bolstered by Orwellian doubletalk about "improving" the environment, when in fact such methods improve short-term wood production at the expense of everything else.

The economic picture confirms the political and ideological one of the forest services as mainly concerned to protect the interest of the forest industries. The forest services generously shoulder the unprofitable part of production, leaving the profitable part in private hands. They make large losses (last year exceeding \$30 million for Australia, without counting the heavy indirect support services), which have been increasing since 1950. The losses are due to the fact that royalties are set well below the cost of production, amounting to a large public subsidy for the forest industries, and providing strong temptation for the cutting of environmental corners. There is a particularly heavy public subsidy for the production of raw material for the paper and packaging industry, since royalties are much lower for pulpwood than for sawnwood, although it costs almost as much to produce. Yet forest services strongly resist attempts to lift royalties to more realistic levels, because of their interest in maintaining artificially high levels of consumption and use to benefit both themselves and the forest industries. This is clear in the WA EIS, where the Forests Department complain that more realistic royalties would lead "to a lower standard of utilisation". Use (even for overseas consumers) is what

counts, regardless of public costs or welfare. The woodchip industry raises broader questions: for, one might ask, if one cannot stop mindless development where there is environmental deterioration and no public benefits, only heavy financial costs, what chance is there of stopping any sort of development? It also provides a test case for a discriminating vs indiscriminating attitude to economic growth. Unfortunately, with the Federal Government's acceptance and endorsement "as soundly based and in the national interest" and 'improving the environment' of the Manjimup project, in some ways a particularly vicious project, there is little ground for hope that the Labor Government will be much better on this sort of development than the previous Government, notorious for its indiscriminating attitude to development and its identification of the interests of Australians with the interests of particular industries.

As one might expect when activities are directed to private interest and are unable to withstand much public scrutiny, there is a well developed system of repression, secrecy and censorship on the forestry scene. Despite the fact that what is being exploited is nominally a public resource, and that there is clearly public loss and private gain, royalties, and especially pulpwood royalties, are a closely guarded secret. Little information about planned projects is available to the public in advance (the one shining exception being the Territory service since the arrival of Enderby), the worst state in this respect being, predictably, Q'land. But the information deliberately withheld from Australians is freely advertised to the Japanese market. The forest services' tender regard for the needs and opinions of the forest industries contrasts strikingly with the contempt for others this attitude demonstrates. With the public release of EIS for woodchip projects, this secrecy may disappear to some extent, although details of private profits will remain confidential, as will royalties in general.

It is not merely non-foresters who suffer from this system however. It is the NSW Forestry Commissioner's proud boast that none of his staff (the "real forest ecologists") has ever

complained about the Eden woodchip project. There is little doubt about what would happen to any who did, or whose doubts were publicly expressed. Federal public servants are of course in a hopeless position, and their jobs can be jeopardised at a word or phone call from the Commissioner. Since access to state forests is essential for research and teaching purposes, and the Commissioner is empowered to prohibit anyone he likes from entering state forests or carrying out research there, he has a good hold over members of university forestry departments, and has been known to use it to stifle possible adverse criticism by ANU foresters. The need for workers to rely on confidential data supplied by the service, the funding of research projects, and the virtual complete monopoly of the source of employment for students, are further sources of control. Not surprisingly, few professional foresters are willing to rock the boat. And it must be admitted that many (perhaps most) can see nothing wrong with these developments, and have simply bought the value system which inspires them.

CSIRO workers are hamstrung by a system of censorship and self-censorship, and often the same reliance on state forests for research projects; in addition, the forest services had for many years an understanding with the CSIRO that there was to be no "poaching", and CSIRO workers attempting to investigate the effects of forestry activities on various aspects of the environment were "warned off". Consequently this much-needed research, which was not being done by forest services themselves, was effectively blocked, and some of the most concerned and knowledgeable workers silenced.

With so many workers in the conventionally relevant areas silenced, complacent or sold out to the wood production ideology, the burden of speaking out and opposing the alarming march of forestry "progress" falls on others, and particularly heavily on other university workers whose disciplines have some bearing on these problems.

V & R. Routley, RSSS.

WORLD FUCKED BY PEOPLE

Dr Dayalan Devanessan stood right out at the recent National Seminar on World Population for his ability to end theoretical waffling discussion and bring the seminar back to earth. He has been involved in community medicine in India and has worked in neglected provincial border areas. He is at present doing a Diploma of Public Health at Sydney University and has aims to upgrade the importance of community medicine in India's health and development programmes.

Frank Muller and John Madden interviewed Dr Devanessan at the National Population Seminar.

Woroni: What are your observations concerning population policy in India and its effects?

Dayalan Devanessan: Well you see India was the first country in the world to start a national family planning program way back in 1951. But India being a very conservative country in a certain sense had to start slowly, so the only method we adopted initially was the Rhythm method. And some doctor developed a set of beads. You know, 28 beads, green beads, red beads in the middle and green beads again and each day the person pushed one bead along the line. When it came down to the red beads of course that was the time when you were supposed to keep off. But of course it didn't work because the husband would come home and quietly shove a couple of beads along the line. So in the second 5 year plan all methods of birth control were employed — except abortion. But now we have a massive family planning programme — its really colossal with a tremendous amount of money being spent and we have a cafeteria system whereby the person can choose either to use the condom or a loop or the pill or any other method. Though the main drive is of course for sterilization because its the only permanent method, so 8 million sterilizations have been done in India — 90% of them male. So its a country where men have accepted family planning more than the women. But altogether we've got to meet 100 million couples, that our target (this is the reproductive age group) speaking 14 different major languages and about 300 different dialects. How do you communicate family planning to these people?

Besides that there's the problem that the urban people accept family planning because they are living within a cash economy, and the rural people still don't. So that what we've found now is that for the first few years, every year people were accepting family planning. But last year we found that despite of a tremendous amount of money being spent the number of acceptors has suddenly dropped. So then we begin to wonder if there is some other factor — they're spending the money, they've got the programme going, the loops are available, the condoms are available, why aren't the people accepting it. And then you begin to worry about the social factors. Its a medical programme you see, and they give information and talk about physiology but they don't worry about social factors. And you realise that where there is a barter economy rather than a cash economy, in fact, children are an asset. So for that reason, since 1951 only 14 million people have accepted family planning. That's only 14% of the target population so in that sense its a flop.

Woroni: But isn't this better than nothing?
D.D.: Yes, but now you see we've reached a saturation point. For instance condoms are advertised on big billboards all over the country — there's no fear of this sort of thing. Mahatma Gandhi didn't approve of family planning. He thought it was immoral. But Indira Gandhi now welcomes it as an innovation which will make life happier for people. So there's been a tremendous change in outlook in contraception. And even abortion was legalised in India last year — its abortion on demand only we didn't call it that — its called the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act. But in spite of that it seems to have stopped all of a sudden and its not filtering down to the village levels.

And there's one more thing I should tell you. In India family planning is a national emergency and after our experience with three wars — two with Pakistan and one with China family planning is on a war footing. That means that if a person comes to a clinic and says 'I want a vasectomy' — its an emergency operation. All other surgery must stop and he must get his vasectomy immediately.

Everyone's behind it. But in spite of this its still only 14% when a country like Japan can achieve 80%

Woroni: What percentage of vasectomies are urban and what are rural?

D.D.: Well its about 50-50 I'd say. Because when a person has a vasectomy, we give him a monetary incentive — we pay him up to 70 rupees — that \$7 — but that about one and a half month's salary, if he was getting a salary. So this is a big amount of money so its a tremendous incentive. And its only because he's a poor man and we haven't raised the economic status that he now comes for the monetary incentive and gets a vasectomy. But the Government can't afford to moralise because the problem's so big.

Woroni: Could you clarify the situation about using a subsidy system as Professor Pitchford has suggested to achieve a more successful family planning campaign in the rural areas?

D.D.: One of the problems here is that you are not dealing with a cash economy so what do you subsidise with? Say you introduce rural banks, which they are trying to do but its got to come very slowly — you don't have enough money or capital in the hands of the Government to subsidise. So its just economically not possible at this stage.

Woroni: What about overseas aid?

D.D.: This is one of the areas where this aid could help. Not in planning, they shouldn't tell us what to do. But you see the capital is available. But usually overseas aid has a lot of strings attached to it and invariably its helping the country that donates it in many subtle ways. The United States gives us money for research, but they decide what the research will be. Not in the college where I work, one guy's studying rose aphids. Now these are not even Indian aphids, and they're grown in south India where they have to have air conditioned rooms to keep the roses under American conditions. But the professors happy: he thinks he's doing a lot of research. But the ultimate benefit of this is that they're got a good brain and cheap research work — which ultimately benefit the United States. The benefits of this aid is of no value to India. And you really wonder, because what is given with the left hand is taken by the right.

Woroni: Do you think a conference like this is likely to achieve anything?

D.D.: One of the problems with this particular conference is that its got a whole lot of non-governmental agencies and they are not going to make policy — and how effective are non-governmental agencies going to be in influencing government policy. So that ultimately it boils down to politics. Unless these organisations are politically inclined at least, really big changes are not going to come about. But in the dissemination of information, maybe they will be effective; but in ultimate formulation of policy they should not fool themselves. They should just say, 'look we want to get money for this or that and we want to disseminate information. This is not the body that is going to plan the strategy. But it makes you feel big, you know, passing magnificent resolutions that the people of the world must limit their numbers or something like that. We've got to know our limitations.

Woroni: What are your views about the ability of people of this conference to understand the problems at the village level in India or in any other developing country?

D.D.: I really don't think that these people can ever comprehend what I'm trying to say. Because poverty is such a something which you can't irradiate like cholera, because poverty is a whole lot of people, how they live, their attitudes. So in fact you can't even hate poverty, you love it. You've got to love people. This is the only solution. So unless you come to India and know what the people are and know what poverty is... So sitting here and looking up all these statistics and saying, well the poverty level is this — its not. You can never understand the problem. The nature of poverty is such that you can't understand unless you go there, and I can't explain it to you unless you see. The rural communities have probably lived at this low level for centuries, whether there was an Indian monarch or a British monarch — it made no difference to them. They were living at a very low economic level. But to walk into any Indian village today, they are happy people they are smiling and they are laughing. They welcome you into their houses and they share their food with you. Now, you begin to wonder how have they managed this, what keeps them going. To you there is obvious poverty, they may be in obvious misery, they might not be wearing clothes, it might be terribly cold, there might be one woman lying with one sarl on and three kids under the same piece of cloth. But they survive. And they're not using money so obviously they are not surviving because of money. They are not motivated to make money because there is no money. So they have got a totally different system of values which is based on relationships with each other, they get tremendous support from each other you see. And this is probably the most valuable thing they have and it has kept them going for these 5000 years. And it is something which we are unable to calculate because you can't put down in statistical terms how much love exists between a mother and her child: it is invaluable.

Now we are trying to give them all clothes and shoes and a better house but in trying to do this — it might be a good idea — but you might in fact destroy the value system these people have and make them materialistic.

Woroni: Like the Aborigines?
D.D.: Like the aborigines, there are a lot of similarities. We've got to learn... Our systems are breaking down because we are beginning to lack relationships and now that we've done it for ourselves we're going to impose it on them too. But at least we have the satisfaction of good food and things like that. But in India there are going to be one billion people by 1994 so no matter how much you might believe in technology, these people are not going to have the types of housing and clothing that you are having today.

At least you have alternatives, but if you break their value system and do not give them sufficient so called 'luxury' goods you are probably going to have a very unhappy set of people. And its not poverty and misery that are going to cause revolutions, its when you realise the hopes of people and promise them something they don't get that you are going to have a revolution. I'm not saying keep them below the poverty line — what I'm saying is that you have to think up a strategy to give them some additional creature comforts without destroying the communal life.

So you begin to wonder how can you help. I really wonder if you can help. What you've got to offer us is technology, which we don't want — because its destroying us. Urbanisation is destroying the village life. It might help the city dweller, like me. I'll probably be happy to have a car and all these kind of things. But by giving me that, there is a silent majority you don't watch — their opinions — they have no media to do this — they're all the worse off, because the little cottage industries that they did have are being destroyed.

So this is the difference between Nehru and Gandhi. Nehru thought that through urbanisation and industrialisation the villager would be; but Gandhi realised this was not possible. He realised the importance of Labour intensive cottage industries — give everybody a job — employment is very important because if a chap has a job at least he is satisfied. So give him labour intensive industries which will give the money back to the village level and not take it away and give it to the townspeople. Their standard of living is going up while the villages standard of living is going down. Even in India the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.

There has been a lot of talk at the conference of the idea of family planning as a form of ideological imperialism. Actually that idea is not talked about; there isn't any account of it in any paper in India saying that this is an ideological imperialism, strangely.



Woroni: This is more of an African thing...
D.D.: Yeah, maybe, they have smaller numbers to worry about. Whereas India... Of course the media is very receptive to any help that family planning

I think they realise that the whole country can actually produce greater numbers than we are producing. And actually, there's no hope for any other country to keep pace with us. The Indians know for a fact that in spite of family planning we are going to be a bigger population than China and we are pretty confident that our numbers in spite of anybody's effort to control them will be pretty high... and we don't want it to be too high because we know there's going to be widespread famine otherwise. And this hasn't figured much... in fact they are pretty disappointed that the UN didn't help in the first instance when they requested aid for family planning and the Rockefeller

Foundation and the Ford Foundation decided to help them. Though at first these commissions thought that India needed sanitation... they wanted to turn it into a sort of latrine paradise. And this was resented... a strange thing. But when they decided to put their money into family planning it was welcomed.

The thing is that after six children the women are all in favour of family planning — they don't want to have 13 children. But this is wise — they hope 3 will survive. You have a high infant mortality in India so she always asks 'can you assure that at least 3 will survive?' So that even if the idea's changing for smaller families they think they have to be sure they get at least 3 children so they have six. But all women who already have six children are strongly in favour of family planning. So though I generalise and say they want children its not true after a particular point.

Woroni: And what are your views about population policies in the developed countries in terms of resource use?

D.D.: Yes, this is one thing that bothers me, see we've got to think in terms of world citizens, although to tackle the problems in India you need an Indian mind. But after all it is a world problem, and as resources are burning out in the world — and you know that 1 American kid costs as much as 500 Indian kids then you wonder what population policy is all about in terms of world resources. And so for this reason I think its very important when you balance it out and talk about population and resources that there are some countries that have got to realise that they are the countries that have to family plan in fact at a greater rate than perhaps some of the Asian countries. They are eating the resources much faster than the Asians are! And this is not emphasised enough. Its not the Indian that really needs the vasectomy, its the American. He really shouldn't have 4 children although it seems economically feasible — and he is using the oil from Arab Countries — its not even his — but you're got to share...

Woroni: This is the problem we have in Australia. We go round and we say this to people but it doesn't pull any political weight within Australia at all.

D.D.: Perhaps this is the type of problem where a conference such as this could be helpful. They're not changing the policy of a particular country but they're changing the attitudes of people. Attitude is in fact the most important thing because it costs a hell of a lot of money to try to introduce programmes to change attitudes which in the long run are going to be most beneficial. And perhaps we needed more sociologists and psychologists who could tell us how to change attitudes. Because this is what you're up against: how do you change the attitude of a person to the problem and unless attitudes are changed the problem will never be solved.

Woroni: But in Australia we have the problem of a catholic population — like a lot of countries in the 'western world' where they are resisting attempts by people to change attitudes to bring about education.

D.D.: On moral grounds? This perhaps is the area where the medical world may come up with something if they can find a contraceptive measure that is not directly involved with destroying the embryo or something like that which might cause moral objections. I still believe that medicine has to do a lot of research on human reproduction and sexuality — this is one of the areas we should be researching more rather than the rarer diseases because it is of tremendous importance. So that the two have to go together. We still strive to change attitudes. Now the Roman Catholic Church will become more honest with itself one day and change. The fact is... now in Sydney a study was done last year and they found that 21% of the educated R.C.'s are taking the pill... 21%... on medical grounds! For acne and painful periods and things like this. In the general population only 1% of people get the pill on medical grounds. So that obviously to them, they must one day realise that they are being very dishonest and perhaps the Pope should be sent back to India, or South America perhaps, because in India we have only 1% R.C.'s. But in countries in South America which are having a population explosion — he ought to spend a little more time there to realise what population is all about. He thinks he's seeing a big crowd outside the Vatican every Friday or Saturday or something giving the blessing. But he did come to India and saw a crowd which was in the millions and then he knew what a crowd was like. After the birth control encyclical came out it was described as a bold leap into the dark ages, but a change will soon come to the R.C. church. And you know this Aboriginal, Shirley Smith — she openly said she was advocating the pill to one of her friends although she was Roman Catholic herself — to say this together in one breath — obviously attitudes are changing and its probably only the hierarchy who are sticking to it — they don't realise their congregation has changed.

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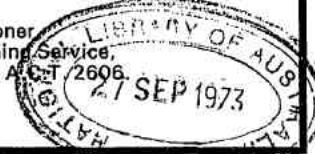
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